

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3 and 5-20 are active. Claims 1 and 15 have been amended to a catalyst which comprises at least one cation selected from the group consisting of Cr, Zn, Ca, Zr, Ti, Na, La, and Hf. Support for this amendment is found in original Claims 3 and 16 and in the specification on page 4, line 6. Claims 3 and 16 have been revised to refer to particular cations described on page 6, lines 7 and 8 of the specification. Accordingly, the Applicants do not believe that any new matter has been added.

The Applicants thank Examiner Zucker for the courteous and helpful discussion of January 6, 2004. The cited prior art discloses copper-based catalysts. It was suggested that the prior art rejections might be addressed by directing independent Claims 1 and 15 to catalysts involving other metals, such as Cr, Zn, Ca, Zr, Ti, Na, La, and Hf. The Applicants have now so directed the claims. Favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

Rejection—35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1, 3, 5, 7-13, 15-18 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hurtel et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,857,239. The process of Hurtel does not anticipate the claimed process, because it does not use a catalyst and uses different metal compounds as polymerization inhibitors than those used as catalysts by the invention. The claimed process involves catalysts comprising Cr, Zn, Ca, Zr, Ti, Na, La, and Hf; Hurtel, see col. 1, lines 34-35, indicate that no catalyst is used. The polymerization inhibitors used by Hurtel, described in col. 1, lines 67-68, are iron sulfate, copper sulfate and copper acetate.

Rejection—35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 3, 5, 7-18 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being anticipated by Hurtel et al., U.S. Patent No. 4,857,239. The process of Hurtel does not render obvious

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the claimed process, because it does not use a catalyst and uses different metal compounds as polymerization inhibitors than those used as catalysts by the invention. The claimed process involves catalysts comprising Cr, Zn, Ca, Zr, Ti, Na, La, and Hf; Hurtel, see col. 1, lines 34-35, indicate that no catalyst is used. The polymerization inhibitors used by Hurtel, described in col. 1, lines 67-68, are iron sulfate, copper sulfate and copper acetate. Hurtel does not disclose or suggest using the catalysts of the present invention.

Allowable Subject Matter

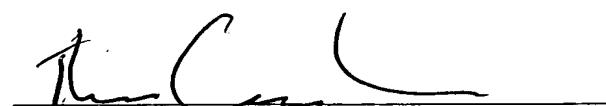
The Applicants thank Examiner Zucker for indicating that the subject matter of Claims 6 and 19 is otherwise in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the Applicants respectfully submit that this application is now in condition for allowance. An early notification to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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